

COMMUNIQUÉ

Australian Bicycle Council Meeting Report 23/11/06

Attended by Tim Hughes, Land Transport NZ, whose comments are in brackets below.

The Australian Bicycle Council (ABC) met in Adelaide on 23 November 2006 and was hosted by the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, South Australia. The Adelaide meeting was the last ABC meeting for 2006, and, Dennis Walsh, ABC Chair, chaired the meeting. This communiqué summarises the main discussions, decisions and actions arising from the meeting.

(Comment: The day prior to the meeting, less formal discussions were held mostly around communications, local government surveys and the potential for benchmarking).

(Comment: Better automatic cycle counters: An inspection by bicycle of recent initiatives in Adelaide included a new counting station for bicycle using new inductive loop design that permits cyclist riding in a cycle lane to be distinguished from adjacent cars and trucks. Contact Tim Hughes for details.)

The meeting was preceded by the 'Business of Cycling Breakfast', which was held in Adelaide on 22 November and organised by Cycling Promotion Fund. Breakfast speakers included:

- Tim Blumenthal, Mountain Bike Hall of Fame Inductee and the current CEO, 'Bikes Belong Coalition, USA';
- Leon Bignell, MP Mawson; and
- Noel McFarlane, Chair of Bicycle Industries Australia.

The 100 guests included tourism operators, Regional Development Boards and Local, State and Federal Government and Regional Tourism Commissions.

The meeting and breakfast coincided with the 2006 Australasian Cycle Tourism Conference, which also included delegates from New Zealand and the United States. The 2007 Australasian Cycle Tourism Conference is to be held at Olympic Park, Sydney.

Outcomes of the ABC Meeting on Thursday, 23 November 2006

Communications Strategy

On 22 November, a Working Group of the council developed the key objectives for a Communications Strategy to guide the ABC's work in 2007. The two core objectives are to:

- Raise awareness and understanding of the Australian National Cycling Strategy 2005-2010; and
- Raise awareness and understanding of the ABC's role.

"I look forward to next year and achieving the vision of the National Strategy of increasing cycling in Australia through the efforts of the jurisdictions, industry members and us as a Council. I believe we can achieve more through the implementation of our Communications Strategy." Dennis Walsh, Chair.

This will be reported on further at the next meeting.

Annual Progress Report on National Strategy

The ABC Secretariat is preparing a Draft Annual Report to be presented to the Australian Transport Council in early 2007. The report will focus on progress and issues in implementing the National Cycling Strategy.

Scoping Paper on Performance Indicators

The Council endorsed the recommendations of a paper to “Collect and Report Compatible Cycling Related Data to Provide a National Perspective on Cycling”. Progress in compiling a summary of national cycling data will be reported on.

(Comment: A similar exercise is happening in NZ with MOT and Land Transport NZ developing performance indicators for sustainable transport. As in Australia the problem is a lack of consistent quality data.)

Scoping Paper on Impediments to Cycling

Action 1.9 in the National Cycling Strategy is to investigate and report on regulatory, taxation and other fiscal impediments to increased cycling. This report is substantially complete. Council members have compiled a summary of 'approaches to cycling in new developments' across Australia and New Zealand to highlight good practice. This paper will be finalised at the next meeting and included in the Annual Report.

Draft Survey on LG cycling initiatives and network plans

The Council, in conjunction with the Australian Local Government Association, will administer a survey of local governments across Australia in February 2007. The purpose of the survey is to determine the current level of cycle infrastructure and level of priority for cycling within local government and to find out how the ABC can facilitate greater local government involvement in cycling activities. An update on the survey results will be reported at the next meeting.

(Comment: NZ is developing a benchmarking tool to permit authorities to assess how well they are providing for walking and cycling (A Getting there action). The Australian LG survey is contributing to this process. The NZ rep is presenting on international best practice in benchmarking for cycling at the March 07 meeting).

Develop Strategic Research Program

Council members are preparing a set of research proposals for funding consideration in 2007. Proposed research topics will be discussed at the next meeting. Suggestions for research topics are welcome via the ABC Secretariat.

(Comment: (NZ (MOT) is also currently preparing a research strategy for cycling and walking as one of the ten getting there actions)

Power Assisted Bicycle Regulations

The Council attended an information session in which a number of Power Assisted Bicycles (PABs) were displayed. The display and discussion assisted members to better understand the performance characteristics of PABs. This information will be used by the bicycle industry in the development of a proposal for a new approach to regulating PABs. The Council noted progress on the draft proposal, which will be reported on further at the next meeting.

Austroads Traffic Management and Road Design Review Panels

Comments from the ABC on the draft Guides to Traffic Management were submitted to the Traffic Management Review Panel Meeting, held the week following the Council meeting. Council members will comment on further drafts of the Guides to Traffic Management as they become available.

Next meeting

The next ABC meeting #25 will be held in Brisbane on 15-16 March 2007 to coincide with Queensland's Bike Week.